



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

PSYCHOLOGY AND SCIENTIFIC METHODS

THE PASSING OF THE SUPERNATURAL

"I'm a-moving on, sir."—The dying Jo, in "Bleak House."

EXTREMES meet; the lowly human being and the supernatural, the omnipotent spirit of all things.

A short time ago I happened to read a magazine article entitled, "Christianity in the Crucible." The article was made up largely of quotations from many of the writers and teachers of the day and I found myself included with the rest. All by direct quotation were represented as either plainly implying or quite openly predicting a radical change if not even a complete downfall for Christianity, and the author of the article, although often unfair, was obviously and, I think, genuinely solicitous and he was doubtless expressing an anxiety that is wide-spread.

Within an hour after reading "Christianity in the Crucible" I came upon a newspaper paragraph in which one of America's great college presidents was reported as saying that the future religion would do without the supernatural. So not only Christianity was waning or passing, but also already there was talk of a new religion and in the new religion the supernatural was to have no place. What could it all mean? The question was hardly a new one, but as it came to me then it had gained new and peculiar force and it gave a challenge that was not to be put aside and, with apology for so much autobiography, I found myself recalling Dickens's story of poor Jo and seeing in it a deeply significant allegory. Was not the supernatural being rudely told to "move on"? Indeed, was it not even dying and could it not be heard, out of its own great humility, to speak as Jo spoke: "I'm a-moving on, sir"? Not, of course, that the novelist ever thought of such a thing; he was only a great novelist. But somehow extremes do meet, the lowly natural and the supernatural, and at the present time there must be some truth, some deep truth, in all the critical and skeptical reflections on Christianity. Moreover, few men, if any, can honestly deny that in some sense the

supernatural is passing. It is passing, too, under the conditions of pathos and quiet heroism that belong to the humble death. No one, following the books of the day, reading the papers and magazines, attending the churches and the colleges and universities, knowing anything about the current religious mysticism, so evident in the various reactionary movements, or about the often non-religious or even irreligious conceits of certain so-called ethical and socialistic movements, meeting the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, and observing in general how feeble are the established religion's offense and defense, how irreverent, not always but very often, are the criticism and attack against it, how wide-spread is a total indifference to it, and how much truly spiritual living is going on quite without benefit or without any apparent benefit of it—no one, I am sure, can fail to have some feeling for the pathos or some vision of the heroism. "Dead—And dying thus around us every day!" reflects the novelist. Has not the supernatural, perhaps in the person of some God, died pathetically and heroically many times in the past as it is dying to-day?

The passing of the supernatural is no ordinary theme even for philosophy. One has to be bold to discuss it, running large risks; the risk of a language that must be more or less technical; the risk of offensive subtlety; the risk of misunderstanding. But the question as to what it can mean is, as was said, a challenge, having become for the present time a central and a most vital issue, so that no risks can seem too great, if only there be a chance of coming into some light. Why must even the supernatural die? Is Death indeed such a grim reaper that he must take our very Gods and our very religions from us? And, if he must take them, have we anything left to put in their places? Must their going, too, involve so much humiliation? As to the religion of Christianity, must this also—how do the words run?—lose its whole world in order to gain its own soul? These are questions that at the present crisis must be faced.

In a phrase, as truistic as it is heavy with meaning, as commonplace as it is vital and wonderful, death—of a civilization or of a man and possibly also of a God—is "liberation of the spirit." This phrase—or some one of its many equivalents—men use easily, often too easily. It has for them a strange power or charm. It brings comfort for loss; solves the problem of loss; and so gives, both to those who are gone and to those who are left, victory over the death that has brought the loss. Yet, in spite of, if not possibly because of, its peculiar power, men get to use it too glibly. Common things and miraculous things alike have a way of making men glib. But

the power or marvel of that phrase, "liberation of the spirit," calls for explanation. Its meaning must be sought out and, if discovered for the death of a civilization and for the death of a human being, must somehow help to an appreciation of that supreme, however humble, death, even the passing of the supernatural.

Now the spirit which is said to be liberated may be thought of and usually is thought of, if liberated by the death of a man, as a being or substance, a peculiar form of existence, an "entity," opposed to the body, and in this sense it is known as the soul. If liberated by the death of a civilization, it is an ideal meaning, rather than a substance, a matter or a form of thought or belief, opposed to the letter. Thus, the body dies and the soul takes its flight. The letter—the visible, formal life of custom and institution—passes and the invisible spirit is set free. And these two things—I waive for the present a third thing—which the spirit may be, the substance and the ideal meaning, the one individualistic and personal, the other generally humanistic and social, are of course related to each other or involved in each other most intimately, although the condition of their relation or connection can not be easily described. Doubtless they are related as in general any substance or thing and the idea or thought which corresponds to it are related. Are not things or substances always individual? And meanings, or ideas, are not these always social? But, whatever may be the relation and in particular whatever may be the difference between those two applications of the term spirit, they have the following in common, that in either case within its own region whatever dies or passes is particular, relative or partial, being on the one hand personally, on the other socially local and temporal, and what is liberated is universal and whole, being spatially and temporally or geographically and historically unconfined. The question, accordingly, of death or of the liberation of the spirit is in general the question of the relation of part, and whole and with this understanding of it, certainly not at all novel, I would attempt a solution in the following pages.

But a fundamental difficulty appears at once. If wholeness of life or thought, of being or meaning, ever really brings comfort against loss or solves the problem of loss or brings victory over death, it does so quite against what first view suggests. Wholeness is so tyrannical. It seems only to overwhelm and even to deny or betray what is partial; to kill quite dead, if I may speak so, instead of to revive or restore in any way. Again and again personally and socially the brutality of the whole has troubled mankind and death has seemed to have no meaning but that. Yet, to assert and then gradually explain, wholeness, the evidence of which is always in

death's liberation of the spirit, be it wholeness of being, like that of the soul, or wholeness of meaning, like that of the truth or of the principle or spirit, or—let me now say in anticipation—wholeness of possibility, like that of God, is in reality no tyrant, whatever first thought may make it. Brutality to its parts is neither a prerogative nor a bent of anything whole. On the contrary, such brutality can belong only to smallness, not to wholeness. A true whole, in the interest of its own size, must be forever loyal to its own parts, to many of them and to all their differences, not one, not even the least, falling to the ground without its concern. All of which may be hard to see and is, perhaps, something which can not be merely seen. Yet I think I can give it meaning in three ways, that is, in order, as applied to the spirit and the letter, as applied to the soul and the body, and then, in conclusion, as applied to the ever-living God and the dying God or to the supernatural *in toto* and the supernatural *in parte*.

I

Thus, to consider first the spirit as opposed to the letter, from this special point of view I would defend my thesis that the true whole has supreme concern for all its many different parts in the following steps, discussing, to begin with, the mortality of the always partial letter, then the assertion of the spirit, which is the whole, and lastly the spirit's realization only upon restoration or renaissance of the mortal letter.

The mortality of the letter is known and fairly well understood by most men. The visible ways of life and thought, the codes and the creeds and the institutions, the prevailing doctrines and rites of all sorts, which at any time constitute the letter, are always at once necessarily local or provincial and necessarily in contact and conflict with an outside world, alien if not barbarian. Indeed, their very development and establishment, their formation or formulation and their crystallization, however outwardly or visibly provincial, are incident to such contact and conflict and so, as is important to add, can never represent all sides of the life and interest of a people. Moreover the conflict which makes them always ends by unmaking or undoing them too, doubtless quite as much because of the unrepresented home life beneath the surface as because of the foreign contact which the conflict implies, and, whatever else this seeming discrepancy may really signify, it has always given color to the notion of the brutality of the whole, suggesting that particular institutions and civilizations are allowed to rise only in order that with a sort of grim, Neronic enjoyment they may be destroyed, or making deeply true the old myth of Mother Earth having offspring only that she

may maintain her own life by devouring them. But, further, all those visible ways of life and thought in the course of time, in the "fullness of time," only anticipating their undoing, become consciously an outer form or dress for life, its spoken letter rather than its reality or its real intent or spirit, and with this change criticism and skepticism succeed the one-time zealous and unquestioning devotion. Simply, the conflict, developing, as it does and must not only both a broader and a deeper view of life or both a more cosmopolitan and a more inwardly personal view of life, but also a broader and a deeper conduct of life, makes the contestants come at the last to out-grow, that is to say, to betray, the very instruments or devices by which they have so far been successful. Indirectly, when not directly and openly, they come to deny the letter, at best treating it only as mere form or convention, as only so much dress, and, when the worst comes, throwing it off altogether. This dress may indeed have been devised in such a way as to be quite ornamental, but in any case it comes to serve for a time as only a useful covering and disguise for the new real life, become only the more conscious and the more zealous and interesting because so well clothed, into which the people have grown. And in due time, as has been suggested, it is cast aside; the letter is brought to the hour of its passing.

Of course, commonly progress and civilization have been thought to depend largely if not wholly on visible form or dress and this common notion, especially manifest in the peculiar conceits of morality and evident also, although with less assertion and not so uncompromisingly, in those other marks of a civilization, art and science and even philosophy, can not be without warrant, but, if the letter or the form pass, as it must, and in particular if it pass for some good purpose, as somehow it must be supposed to do, then, literally and figuratively, interest in the nude, in an unclothed nature, which, although only the temptation of morality, is the license, the always somewhat hesitating license of art, the unblushing candor of science and almost the freedom of philosophy, must also have warrant. At least this: the passing of dress, denial of form or letter, is as natural or essential as its development or assumption. In the way of the myth Mother Earth may produce formal civilizations, but her life does require also—to put it humorously—their disappearance. And what can be the good purpose?

The letter passes and the partial life—partial at least in its formal manifestations—for which the letter has stood seems lost in the whole and in what may still appear as the tyrannical, all-consuming whole. But the story is by no means yet told. As I have come, further, to put the matter to myself, summing up so, not merely cer-

tain depths of personal experience, but also and especially great changes of human history, denial of the letter is coincidently assertion of the spirit. This is almost if not quite axiomatic. It is even too evident, as some things often are, the light being blinding for a time, to be fully appreciated at once! Special habits of life, special formulations, may have to go, but only to lose them or to dismiss them, since their going must have its cause, is to imply not that they have stood for nothing or served nothing in their day and generation, but that they are become inadequate to just that which they were serving, and so that theirs was, while it lasted, a real service. The original end, then, remains, although the means, at least so far as thought to possess any sanctity or intrinsic worth, be rejected, and the original end remains, too, with a more insistent reality and an enhanced, more comprehensive meaning just because of the rejected means to it. This surviving end, however, is the spirit. May I call it, coining my own adjective, the superliteral spirit?

Historically the institutions of a certain age and people, the state and the church, the organized industry and the morality, may be quite outgrown and, being outgrown, may crumble, but never has their crumbling, although no single stone was left upon another, been without some far but confident vision of a new kingdom expressing adequately what they had ceased to express so, and such confident vision shows assertion of the spirit. The spirit is indeed superior to the letter. The spirit is always adequate. Anarchy has destroyed governments, but never government; license, morals, but never morality; doubt, doctrines, but never truth; heresy and profanity, religions, but never religion. Can one ever deny the particular without asserting the general? If this petty creature which man has constantly found himself, thanks to his visible civilization, thanks to his partial and faulty devices of all sorts, truly is no man, still there is humanity large and whole and vital. Let the petty creature pass, then; the spirit, the human spirit, which is but the natural man or the perfect wholeness of humanity, gets only more, not less, reality, as the pettiness goes. It gets the opened opportunity and so in very truth the reality of a larger life; of a life that is real and is larger in its opportunity just because it has been freed from what had become confining and artificial to it. So the letter passes and we would let it pass. The spirit remains, real and assertive; it remains deep and full in its reality, free with its wide opportunity, unclothed and unrestrained in its splendid vigor.

Assertion of the spirit, always accompanying the passing of the letter, brings extreme license. Nothing is so spiritual, abstractly spiritual, spiritual in the sense of escape from the letter, spiritual

in opportunity as distinct from realization, as license. Let the spirit be asserted, the letter passing, and all the deepest forces of nature are released anew. Not only physical nature will seem to be in riot as never before, but also human nature in its most primitive passions, which though commonly thought so are not merely brutish, will be seen to move forward to acts of violence. Violence, it should be remembered, is the reformer's as well as the transgressor's. Violence is the work of the spirit which can know no law. It is as pure as it may be sensuous. Destruction and reconstruction, sin and righteousness, death and resurrection, monstrosity and miracle, are always the timely witnesses to the superliteral spirit's license and violence. How true it is that the great advances in human history, usually if not always personally led, although why may not yet appear, have come or have begun in years of wide-spread lawlessness, when, the law or the letter having passed, the forces of man and nature have been loose and wild. The free spirit seems to have moved abroad only in storm and lightning. Small wonder that men have worshipped the Hurler of Thunderbolts.

But, although, the letter passing, the spirit comes thus unrestrained and licentious, the passing of the one and the mere coming of the other are not all. The assertive spirit has a yet larger freedom or a yet larger reality than that of license. It gets its full liberation and realization only as it takes the rejected letter, the petty human with its imperfect government, stilted morality, false or only half-true doctrine, conceits of religion and all else, however small and however mortal, back. The rejection made for breadth and depth of life, for universality, by casting down the barriers of particular experience of time and place and people, but the recall makes for reality, for definiteness and embodiment. Above all, as I must insist, the recall also makes for still greater breadth and depth. The spirit, however universal in assertion, is not universal in achievement or in reality, until it has become broad enough actually to restore just that from which in its first license it had stood aloof. So, again, the recall of the letter makes for reality, changing the license of the spirit into a substantial freedom and the opened opportunity into specific accomplishment and—the important addition—the dead and rejected letter into a new-born and a glorified instrument.

Witness how Christendom, built on the ruins of paganism and built certainly not in a day, has become what it is only through a gradual recall of paganism. We read and hear most, it is true, of the Renaissance, that wonderful rebirth of pagan antiquity in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, but antiquity has had a much longer revival than that. Its revival, to say the least as long a

process as its original becoming, began at the very moment of its passing, whenever that was, and in significant stages has been continuing ever since. In the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries there was indeed a recall of ancient learning and literature and art, but were the militarism and legalism that came before and have the industrialism and science coming since been any less truly revivals of antiquity? Who can not see, too, in Augustinianism, the new Jews, I mean the Christian Romans, only reviving once more the idolatrous ways of their forerunners, and in Protestantism only an effort on their part, one of them in fact being the excommunicated Jew Spinoza, once more to worship the true God, a spirit, in spirit and in truth? So the letter of paganism passed and there was indeed, historically notable, a magnificent release of the licentious spirit; but from the very beginning, not only in two or three tardy centuries, that spirit, so free in a world of large opportunity, has been realizing itself only by its crusades, made not less for conquest and treasure, first with one interest and then with another and another always more advanced, than for inspiration, into the east and the past, and by each time discovering, ever with richer meaning, that what had seemed a sepulchre was in reality no more and no less than a wonderful birthplace, the place of a wonder, that is, if possible, greater than that of birth, the place of rebirth.

The letter passes; the spirit comes in its power and license; and the spirit gradually recalls the letter, reviving it, transfiguring all its lines, as fuller meaning always transfigures recalled fact. Growth certainly implies outgrowth, but man never has outgrown anything fully until he has grown back into it or has brought it up into the reality of his new life, finding that what his new life is he really meant before and so that his old ways must, after all, be capable of present translation and *use*.

Use—this is what resurrects. In this one word is told the whole story of Christendom's revival of antiquity. From being in its own time immediate and literal, from being cherished by the people of its time for its own sake, paganism has been made mediate and spiritual. As if with a retracing of its development, first its law and its various tactics of organization, then its art and its science have been used. The great work, in a word, of the liberated spirit has been use of the rejected letter, the rejection being only a necessary preparation before the use could be free and unhampered. In short, whenever in small ways or in large ways, in the simple changes of ordinary life or in so great a thing as the relation of antiquity to Christendom, institutes, that is, the immediately valued and cherished conditions of life, are seen to have become instruments, that is, the freely and

consciously employed means of life, there is clearest evidence of the work of the spirit.

But use, I am reminded, is an unworthy interest, savoring of utilitarianism and commercialism. As the prevailing interest or the more conspicuous interest of a people at any time in its own customs and traditions, use is taken as a sign of decline and so as anything but ideal or spiritual, being rather a symptom of low naturalism. This objection is not without point, but, aside from the fact that contemporaneously with commercialism there is always an assertive although somewhat abstract or unworldly idealism, a great difference is to be noted between a particular people treating its own organized life with all the accumulated treasures of it as only useful, and the use of the life and its treasures by another people or a later generation. The former, taken by itself, does suggest decline, impiety, general irreverence, and selfishness in place of the earlier loyalties to the organized life and, because it implies also an interest on the part of the selfish individuals in keeping intact the standing organization, being selfishly conservative, it has long suggested to me the life and attitude of the miser. Certainly there is no real or free use, but rather hoarding than use. But the latter shows real use. Real use calls for sacrifice of immediate values, for heroic disregard of the treasure's ring and glitter, or for rejection of the means as anything but means, and this is to say that in the history of civilization it has required in preparation and prophecy the martyrdom of great heroic individuals and in fulfillment the surrender and captivity of the people and the sacking and pillaging of their cities. Thus only through the foreigner, that is, vicariously, can real use be accomplished, and only in this sense is use the work of the spirit, humanity, not a single people, being the user as well as also—for so we must certainly think—the real producer. The spirit, then, which is the whole, works through death, through the passing of the letter and even the passing of the people, but in using it translates and gradually resurrects what has passed.

And one thing more must be said with regard to the spirit's being realized only upon recall and real use of the letter. Emphatically the recall and use are more than just fictitiously or ideally true. The use shows the letter still real, as real as the spirit; the means as real as the end. The revived petty and partial life of the past is transfigured in the full sense that it gets the reality, present and substantial, of the whole which, using it, has become so identified with it. To repeat from above, a true whole, in the interests of its own size, must be forever loyal to all its parts, not even the least passing without its concern. The partial past, in other words, as it is transfigured, can lose no whit of its original individuality. In

fact, both as having a place in history or memory and as being vitally and concretely an instrument of the present, it is made more, not less, individual by the change. Greek life and thought, for example, Hebrew aspiration and the Hebrew or Christian vision, Roman government and Roman law, are more distinctly individual, both in history and in the life and consciousness of to-day, than ever before. Mother Earth may have devoured, but she certainly has not lost, her offspring. The partial past in the use of the whole is the past or the part still real and the whole manifestly still insistent on its size.

But a difficulty of much significance must now be considered. While we have been absorbed in the part, the letter, and its renaissance without loss of individuality, we have been assuming what perhaps we had no right to assume, namely, the reality and integrity of the whole. But surely appearances are as much against a real unity or wholeness in human history as they are against the persistence of parts or individuals; parts may seem either to pass altogether or at best to be hopelessly merged into the whole, yet with as much truth that whole is a good deal of a fiction, for it is no more evident than the lost parts; and while in an effort to discredit the imagined tyranny of the whole there must be some advantage in being able to say on the score of what appears that parts and whole, if real, are only equally so, that the whole is, after all, no more real than any of its parts, such an advantage affords only uncertain comfort. As to the evidence of wholeness, of course men do talk boldly of humanity, of human nature, of history, of the human spirit, and so on, and one would think, to hear them, as one would think, reading what so far has been written here, that although invisible or intangible there somehow really and truly is such a whole. Yet, to refer only to something that has been insisted upon here, what positive right has any one to talk sententiously of the whole's loyalty to its parts? Can humanity or the spirit, either at any one time or in its so-called history, be anything more than an aggregation of loose, independent episodes, the Babylonian episode, perhaps, the Egyptian, the Roman, the American, and so forth? *Apparently* there is no solidifying unity; no historical continuity, and no singleness of purpose, no really solidifying plot! No whole, then; no real spirit to use the letter! At least, none, so far as the actual findings go! But—and here is a way out of the difficulty that may save both whole and part—not even the absence of evidence and of course not an insufficiency of evidence can ever be fairly taken as negative evidence. While not positively certain, then, on the evidence, even while, as some might insist, very uncertain, there still is *possible* the reality of a whole. Moreover, if emphasis be put on the fact of insufficient evidence, or of the lack of evidence to such an extent as to

declare that complete evidence never will be secured, then that possible whole, if it be, must be infinite. But such a whole, that is, an infinite whole, is necessarily made up of different parts, of changing parts, and of parts that, though changing, still always persist. Anything less than this would make the whole, not infinite, but finite. Accordingly, not only may there be a whole, and that possible whole would be infinite, but also the infinite whole is as real as the different, changing, and yet persisting things or parts: in history the spirit is as real as the letter that takes special form, that passes, and that is reborn.

All of which, besides meeting the difficulty that was proposed, adds meaning to the mortality of the letter, the assertion of the spirit and the spirit's realization only upon restoration or renaissance of the mortal letter, and affords a fitting conclusion to this section of the present discussion. There can be no loss of the part; no tyranny of the whole. Only a small whole, which can never be the whole, will be or can be tyrannical over parts.

In the relation of letter and spirit the many is thus as real as the one; is, indeed, the large and living reality of the one.

II

And now, so much being evident in the relation of letter and spirit, what is to be said of the body and the soul?

Here instead of dealing with the distinction between part and whole in the field or on the plane of meanings, we are concerned, as will be recalled from above, with the distinction between substances. Body and soul exist, or are thought to exist, as substances, while meanings, whether as the letter which is the visible, or the spirit which is the invisible institution, do not have or are not commonly thought to have substantial existence. Meanings, moreover, are related to substances very much as qualities to things, and this is equivalent to asserting that the very distinction between meaning and substance is itself only one more case of that between part and whole. As a quality is only partial, not total, to the thing to which it is referred, so meaning is only partial to substance, and, recognizing this, we find ourselves plunged into what may appear to be a hopelessly intricate situation. Letter and spirit as meanings, body and soul as substances, and meaning and substance as realities, are all cases, each pair of course in its own way, of part and whole. What can one do with such a tangle?

But truly there is no tangle or at least there is only the tangle of one's own making. Any region or any category, such as meaning or substance or even such as reality or possibility, may have its own parts and whole and yet itself be only partial or total to some other

region or category.¹ It may even prove here that substance, although larger than meaning, is in its turn only a part of some still more comprehensive whole.

So, as to those two substances, bodies and souls, and as to their relation to the two meanings, the letter and the spirit, of course the former constitute the personnel of the latter; bodies, of the letter or the visible institution, and souls, of the invisible spirit; and with this view the present problem in its first important aspect is nothing more nor less than that of the relation of the personal or individual to the region of meaning or institution, visible or invisible, or say, in lack of a better single term, to the humanistic. How, then, is there warrant for thinking of this relation as one of whole and part?

To imply that the institutional is partial and the personal whole, seems like a hopeless contradiction of most obvious facts, but such *elemental* parts as persons, whether in their character of bodies or in that of souls, are really larger than the whole in which formally they appear as parts. All true elements are only so many *maxima in minimis*. The aggregate wholes in which they appear as component parts are, in all that makes for reality, smaller than the parts themselves. The molecular, for example, is so related to the atomic, and the institutional to the personal or individual. Specifically the individual's body, belonging as it does organically and primarily to the physical or natural world, from which all the positive manifestations or media of social human life, all things in short constituting the letter or language of life at any time, have their origin and to which, having served their time and generation, they must all return, is plainly nothing less than the letter's whole. Is not the body more than its dress or than its outward form under any name? And, in like manner, is not the soul more than the spirit?

As body or as soul the individual or person is thus the including, not the included, being. At least he is this relatively to the letter or the spirit. He is whole; is world-wide or nature-wide or even reality-wide. Again, as compared with the social or institutional, he is no local or temporal creature, but is man always and everywhere, the same here and there, now and then. He can move or travel without meeting anything foreign; he can think or will freely; whereas, to speak strictly, the creature of the institution may do none of these things. And, to come now to what specially concerns us here, the

¹ Also I would add that not even this distinction of part and whole in any of its many cases can escape the character of reversibility which belongs to other fundamental distinctions. Infinite and finite, good and evil, reality and unreality, cause and effect, are all reversible distinctions. In each pair either term can have the value of the other, and part and whole offer no exception to the rule. This fact, however, is only a result of the distinction; it does not destroy or impair the distinction.

person lives and dies as the creature of the institution does not and may not. There are, indeed, as many deaths as natures or kinds of being, and as many lives. There are the life and the death of the letter and of the spirit and the life and the death of the body and even of the soul, and each has its own quality.

Thus, whatever must be said of the soul relatively to the spirit, the body in comparison with the letter or institution lives for shorter time and dies more suddenly and more tragically, being lost apparently more hopelessly in a whole that is larger and more brutal. The body dies after only a few years; not, like the letter, after several centuries. Also for every society or civilization, for every letter or regime, that passes, thousands upon thousands of individuals live their few years on earth and then die. So is death ever near in human life and above all both very frequent and very personal. But a question, still without thought of the soul: Why should this be? Is not the body larger than the letter? Should it not live longer?

As very often happens, what seems *contra* is really *pro*. Thus, in point of fact, the larger and more vital or primary the whole, the more numerous its different parts and also the greater their mortality or their so-called mortality. Simply, as already said, a large whole must have many parts, different parts and changing parts *and a larger whole must be larger in all of these respects*. Thus atoms, if really elemental, if the very parts of the very universe, should be not only countless in number, but also instantaneous or electric in their life and death, their death and life. Doubtless a fantastic suggestion, but, I think, after all, not impertinent. And as such ultimate parts must live and die, die and live again, at once, as if the "vital units" of the universe, so our human persons, parts in their way of a very comprehensive whole, must die after short life and must die tragically. The more life there is, the more death must there be. When a person passes, so much more dies than when a civilization falls, and only because so much more might live, or even because, deeply and vitally and wholly, so much more is living. The body passes, then, but the soul, which is the larger whole, is set free and the soul is greater by far even than the spirit released with the fall of a civilization.

But here appears the second phase of the present problem. Body and soul, like letter and spirit, are part and whole. Of the letter and the spirit we have seen how, the letter passing, the spirit was set free and how the spirit was realized only with restoration of the letter. Are we, then, warranted in saying, analogously, that, the body passing, the soul is set free and that the soul is realized only with the restoration of the body? I think we are, although, saying this, I shall certainly be misunderstood by some whether for criticism

or for approval. No whole can forget its parts. A renaissance of so much of the personal as has passed is as certain as that renaissance in the history of institutions. But herein is no thought of open graves, bodily resurrections, reincarnations, or chattering spirits. Transmigration, too, is not intended, nor is translation or even transmutation meant. These may all possess a certain symbolic value, but not one of them can be adequate to the reality. Indeed, nothing expressible can be adequate to the reality and, true as this is in the death and rebirth of the letter, it is far more deeply true in the death and rebirth of the body. If one's bodily nature were only the definite body that one clothes for a time and that after a time is buried or—better still—burned, then its renaissance would have to be in the form of some literal bodily appearance and the soul also would be thought of as detached at death, but the hypothesis, under which so many actually do their thinking and their believing, is false and of course as seriously misleading as false. One's bodily nature even in one's so-called earthly lifetime is always transcendently more than the body that just lives and dies, and the death, when it comes, instead of being a betrayal of that nature, is only an evidence of it and of its transcendent fullness or wholeness. To return, then, although the manner of the renaissance may not be determined, and, in particular, although the renaissance can hardly imply bodily resurrection or warrant—except as so much symbolism—any of the various ideas or practises, relative either to the body or the detachable soul, which have been so wide-spread among men, still the fact of renaissance remains unaffected. *It remains as firmly established as wholeness and the necessary loyalty of wholeness to parts.*

III

But primarily the interest of this essay was not in human immortality. Both the passing of the letter with the liberation of the spirit and the death of the body with the release of the soul were involved here only as aids to an understanding of the passing of the supernatural. What, then, is one to understand by the supernatural? And by its passing?

Of course many will say that the soul as opposed to the body or even that the spirit as opposed to the letter partakes of the supernatural. This is quite true, but besides being a more general term than either soul or spirit the supernatural is also peculiarly theological in its reference. These considerations aside, however, the supernatural has commonly signified a being and a power, as well as a region and a substance, quite apart from and wholly unlike the natural. The natural and the supernatural have been two separate and different things. In place, then, of this dualistic and on the

whole medieval view, following a line of thought already indicated here several times, I would suggest that the term supernatural, instead of referring to anything separate and different, only names a region or a nature larger than that of anything positively or definitely real or existent. It names, in a word, the wide region, as deep as it is wide, of possibility. Substantial existence or positive reality of any sort is small when compared with possibility, and the so-called Absolute, the true whole, certainly can not be smaller than anything. From beginning to end, it should be observed, the argument of this paper calls for size, for a true whole, and, as now asserted, the true whole, that is, the "supernatural," is not the actual or the positively or definitely real; it is not defined meaning or existing substance; it is the all-possible or the omnipotent. Were I asked, for example, if God existed, understanding by God that in which all things have been and are and are to be, and wishing also to give him distinctive character, I should have to answer negatively, just as I should answer, when asked if he were a person, that he was not. God is superpersonal. He is also more than existent. He is the possible—the possible that eternally challenges man's will as neither meaning nor existence ever can.²

In the large supernatural region of possibility, furthermore, the difference between part and whole is best recounted, I think, in the following way: on the one hand, accepted and asserted possibility, the possible as an object of positive belief, and, on the other hand, true or indeterminate possibility, the possible as wide and free, as only or purely possible. Conspicuously representing the former, then, that is, the part, in the region of meaning or institution we have the Church; in the region of substance, as intimated above, the soul; and in the still larger region of possibility itself the worshipped and, as must also be said, the mortal God or the mortal supernatural. In the sense and only in the sense which these witness determine can the supernatural be said to pass. Only in this

² Yet negative answers must ever be misleading, for almost certainly they will be taken absolutely when always they should be taken only contextually or relatively. Thus neither the impersonal nor the non-existent character of God can be anything but negative in regard to certain presupposed ideas of personality or of existence. Thus, as to personality, God is personal, yet *not* as any known person is so; and as to possibility, this exists, yet *not* as positive reality exists. Perhaps modern thought has made no greater gain than its recognition and appreciation, so much clearer and fuller than ever before, of the relativity even of its one-time supposedly absolute terms. Certainly personality is not a univocal term, nor is existence or reality, or space or time or causality. "Many men, many minds" is an old adage now grown into its largest truth: "Many existences, many meanings." All things exist, yet also do not exist; for no two things exist in the same way. God, the whole, does not exist as any part exists.

sense can the religion of the future be a religion that is to do without the supernatural. As for the whole, this lies beyond positive assertion and belief and the religion which does without the supernatural of positive belief only enters the region of the whole, the region of unbounded possibility, of the supernatural *par excellence*. The part may pass only in the life of the whole.

And in this third instance the passing of the part, besides having its analogies to what the other two instances of the letter and the spirit and of the body and the soul have already shown, needs to be examined and appraised for certain special characters incident to its peculiar region of possibility. Two of these characters I would consider here with some care. Thus, for the first, if the supernatural *in parte* be the possible as accepted and asserted, then its passing should imply some manifest realization, and, for the second, if the supernatural *in toto* be the possible as only possible, then that manifest realization should bring with it, in place of the abstract and other-world supernaturalism of assertion and belief, a more practical and more dynamic view in accord with which the widely and freely possible would be regarded as immediately present in the real, the supernatural as immanent in the natural. An indwelling possible is always so much larger than a possible that is defined and assertively isolated and hypostatized. Nature contains so much more than Heaven. Heaven is, but Nature grows.

Now, to consider the first, the realization or accomplishment which should be involved in the passing of the supernatural *in parte*, a fact, referred to near the beginning of this paper and having relation to positive events of the day, may be recalled, for it is most suggestive. Thus reference was made to the spiritual living, spiritual, at least by implication, under Christian tests, which in large measure is now going on without benefit of the Christian Church. The Church itself has frequently complained of the indifference or the independence so evinced, but what can be the meaning of it all if not that Christianity's ideals have found some positive realization? Some would doubtless use another word, secularization, and would feel disturbed over so offensive a term, but why take offense at what one should deeply and heartily approve? Should the Church allow itself for a single moment to be open to the charge of jealousy or selfishness? Does the Church, of all enterprises, wish to maintain a monopoly, a protected monopoly of Christian work? Any parent must learn to be glad, not resentful, at the final independence of the child which for years has been under his fostering care, and the Church has been for centuries *in loco parentis*. In brief the secularization of the Christian life through all the means that improve social and hygienic

conditions, that harmonize reason and faith, that make honesty in thought and life as real and practical, that is, as politic, as it has been ideal, and that bind men in all parts of the world together, should insure to what some would call a dying Christianity at least euthanasia or, as I myself would rather put it, a renewal of life, a true resurrection. Christianity may be passing, the "spiritual" in the life of the Church giving place to the "secular," the ecclesiastical to the naturally practical, but, although Christianity be quite dead, long life to Christianity! Long live the new Christianity that must succeed to the dead or dying ruler's throne.

And, if man's Church, as a supernatural institution, is dying from secularization or realization, so also is his soul. If his spiritual life is become the practical life conducted without benefit of the Church, so also personally is he become only—but some *only's* enlarge rather than reduce—a natural being. There is now no spiritual but the natural person. Yet, losing his soul and, of course, losing his former anxiety to insure his soul's salvation, man finds gain instead of loss, attainment instead of failure. That hope for spiritual salvation, made to depend on worldly sacrifices, was always such a selfish thing, morbid and narrow. It was so selfish that it greatly limited opportunity, being quite like conservative investment as opposed to downright giving, or like a merely commercial transaction as opposed to unhampered philanthropy. Truly a man must lose not merely his whole world in order to save his soul, but also even his unworldly soul in order to realize or open up all the possibilities of his whole self. And exactly this latter loss with that large gain is what the present passing of the supernatural soul implies.

But, besides the fallen or falling Church and the passing or lost soul, there is also—if I may recall a phrase reported by Max Müller—the "dead and decrepit" God. Forbidding phrases these, all of them: the fallen Church; the lost soul; the decrepit God. They do indeed suggest the crucible for Christianity. Modern Christendom would appear to be living through the same deep experience that came, as we are told, to the faithful followers of Jesus at the time of his death. The God is dying once more, and dying in great humility, too, for only a few of the faithful seem to care. Large bodies of Christians are almost if not quite indifferent, and although a few are become "reactionary," as if seeking to blind themselves to the change or the loss with a return to rites and symbols, still in their very mysticism and subjectivism, in their superiority to all the evidence, there is a virtual indifference. Others, too, who are not Christians or are not formally Christians, often become offensive and abusive, as if the dying God's humiliation must be made as great as

possible. So, again, the God is dying and dying humbly, and, while I would avoid even any suspicion of cant or of religiosity, I can not help saying that the lesson to-day must be essentially the same as that of something over nineteen hundred years ago. The God dies when his ministrations are finished, and dying leaves his work and so his own continued life to those who have been his followers, his death meaning only larger possibility. So long as he lived, they worshipped and trusted; with his death, they are constrained or free—which should we say?—to work, their work being his resurrection.

So the supernatural is passing and the religion of the future must do without it, but also the supernatural still lives, being reborn in the human and natural. The supernatural is become immanent in the natural and is inspiring or animating the natural with unlimited freedom and possibility. This, however, suggests the second special result of the passing of the supernatural that was to be considered here, namely, the more dynamic view, immediately realistic and practical, which, as was said, would supplant a prevailing abstract other-worldism.

Finally, then, it has certainly been a matter of general remark that the decline of supernaturalism, now so near its limit, has been coincident with the rise of naturalism, but appreciation of the ever-changing quality of the naturalism has been lagging. There is much significance, for example, in the fact that since the rationalistic regard of nature arose she has been viewed mechanicalistically in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but biologically in the nineteenth, while still more recently the view has been psychological. Motion and force at first, then life, she is now fast becoming real only as experience, and with these changes the power outside of nature, the supernatural, has been ever more and more a figurehead, a name without substance, until to-day it is even disappearing altogether. This rise of naturalism, also, has involved a gradual change from a merely cognitional, formally intellectual attitude towards nature, nature being regarded quite objectively or impersonally, being treated even as having an existence quite independent of her observer, to what is distinctly an intimately personal and volitional attitude; for, although as motion or as force or even as evolving life, she could be treated and properly would be treated as objective, as experience she can be real only in and through the attention and will of the experiencing subject. Unfortunately, however, the empiricism, representing the more recent psychological point of view, in accord with which nature is declared to be real only as experience, has often been misinterpreted, and simply because its historical relations are overlooked. An empiricism that is the last term in a certain developing series,

that finally identifies nature with experience only after mathematics and mechanics and biology from their more or less objective viewpoints have told what nature is and what man's relation to nature is or only after theories of knowledge, considerably and sympathetically following the changing regard of nature, have told what the observing subject is and what nature's relation to the subject is, can hardly be the simple-minded, unsophisticated ism that some have insisted on making it or supposing it. Its "experience" must really enjoy—whether in the colloquial or in the real meaning of the word—all that its forerunners have lived through, all the wisdom, all the objectivism, all the logic, and above all, all the universalism and transcendentalism, that they have contributed, and to overlook this, to make its "experience" naïve and immediate instead of sophisticated and immediate, or, as some would use the term, intuitive, is like supposing that there is no difference at all between the simplicity of real childhood and the simplicity of a noble maturity. A great many people have persistently misunderstood the scriptural idea of childhood as a condition of entrance into the kingdom, but I find it easier to forgive them than to forgive those who, although possessing, or being properly supposed to possess, a real knowledge of the history and development of science and philosophy, have nevertheless taken the current empiricism as meaning the naïve and immediate realism of a child. It must surely mean anything but that. To any one who knows its forerunners, who appreciates the development of the series of which it is the present and in this sense the last term, the change of view, the transition from the mechanicalistic to the psychological standpoint, can make this current empiricism mean only a realism that is quite as transcendental and supernaturalistic as it is realistic or—it were perhaps even better to say—that is dynamically immediate and realistic, not just passively or statically so. Truly, with its rise or with the rise of the latest naturalism of which it gives report, the supernatural has passed, but just as truly the supernatural has been reborn immediately in nature. The supernatural *in parte* has passed that the supernatural *in toto* might once more be set free in man's present life or—with the same meaning—that nature, so much larger than Heaven or than any "other world"—might come into her full inheritance. Of course, biological evolution has long been very near to making nature her own superior, the very principle of her life and its changes being regarded as her own, but the recent psychological or epistemological realism, identifying reality and experience and placing action above form, that is, grounding everything in action or will, has fulfilled what the biologists only began. Nature is now freely her own superior, there being no being

or power external to her, and man, now more truly one with nature than ever before, is both man and superman.³

Perhaps, to conclude, the key-word which, if a single word can, will unlock the mystery or uncertainty that may still attach to the foregoing contentions about the present-day naturalism or empiricism and about the death and the rebirth of the supernatural, is the word *will*. Instead, therefore, of concluding this paper with a careful summary, for which I have to hope there is really no need or with a formal peroration, to which I feel no inclination, I will speak very briefly of will, adding as I can to what more or less casually has already been said here about it.

Thus, in the first place, to speak more popularly than technically, there is no true will without uncertainty of result or without what is commonly known as adventure. Also there is no true will without physique. By physique I mean close contact with the actual and concrete. Will is practical as well as adventurous. Intellectually it is informed or enlightened, not merely speculative; emotionally, sane and self-controlled, not sentimental; and actively or morally, responsible and substantial, not just "good." Will, then, characteristically, in human experience marks the union of the actual, the immediately real, and the uncertain but possible, and just because of this, its essential character, I have chosen it as a key-word. Its own native character is at once realistic and transcendental, naturalistic and supernaturalistic.

But, in the second place, what was said of experience, as a term nowadays in use, is also to be said of will. Will, like experience or rather with and in and of experience, is historical. The history which has gone before must determine just what it is now informed with and in reference to what it is sane and self-controlled and for what or with what it is responsible and substantial. True, the professional psychologist or epistemologist, working abstractly or scholastically in the confines of his laboratory or his study, is very likely to forget that the will, or that the experience, which he is examining, is in reality a matter of positive history, and that his work, although usually so much more accurate and painstaking and so much more scientific and intellectual than that of the type with which I would now compare him, is, after all, only the work of an up-to-date reporter. But, however forgetful the abstractly scientific reporter may be and however useful to successful investigation his abstraction may be, his work is reportorial. At times, too, it is also editorial, his disposition often being to interpret and appraise as well as to report.

³ Compare a somewhat different statement of the same idea in a recent article: "The Possible Idealism of a Pluralist," *American Journal of Theology*, July, 1910, especially p. 420.

So, such being the real import of professional study and theory, the present-day will and experience are not without—if not literally, at least figuratively—the value of proper names, referring as they must, in spite of their theoretical dress and the absence of the initial capitals, to an individual of time and place, that is, to specific present-day conditions. In fine, history, so say our up-to-date reporters, telling us as they do of immediate realism and naturalism and of the passing of the supernatural and identifying reality with experience and in their account of experience exalting action above form—history has brought mankind or at least some large portion of mankind, say Christendom, to whose life the reporters consciously belong, to an era of will.

And so, in the third place, all the signs of the time would appear to point to an era of great men. Only great men can make those seemingly common nouns of the day, experience and will, the proper names, initial capitals and all, which sooner or later history is bound to have them.

The rôle of the prophet is not one to be lightly assumed, but on this closing page I must say, for just such reasons as I have been trying to present, that the humble passing of the supernatural seems to me to mean the realized opportunity in the life of Christendom for real and great achievement, for some new exploitation of the region of possibility, and if the nearer future, perhaps only a generation or two away, does not bring some great leaders, great, I mean, to Christendom, not merely locally or nationally great, then my present logic, not to say also my present discretion, will simply prove to have been at fault.

ALFRED H. LLOYD.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

DISCUSSION

THE SHORT-CUT TO REALISM EXAMINED

MANY, who do not wish to enroll themselves in a school of realism, sympathize with the desire for more cooperation and greater consensus among philosophers expressed in the "Platform of Six Realists."¹ A threshing out of problems is, however, necessary to a consensus, and criticism is one mode of cooperation. It may facilitate understanding the remarks that follow if I say that so far as realism means anti-idealism, I agree with it, especially in its contention that it is a paralogism to argue that because things

¹ This JOURNAL, Vol. VIII., No. 15.